

Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



DENSO Manufacturing Tennessee, Inc.
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Performer Landfill Waste Reduction

The Member

DENSO Manufacturing Tennessee, Inc., DMTN, is part of DENSO Corporation's global network of more than 106,000 employees in 34 countries and regions. DENSO is the world's second largest producer of advanced automotive technology, systems and components. DMTN employs 2,500 associates at its Maryville operations. Automotive components and systems produced at DMTN include alternators, starters, instrument clusters, and electronic components.

The Story – Landfill Waste Reduction

In 1999, DMTN operations sent 2,812 tons of waste to the Blount County Landfill. The Blount County Landfill serves 110,000 residents.

2,812 tons is equivalent to sending three automobiles to the landfill every day, 365 days per year and burying it in the landfill.

First Landfill Reduction Target

In January 2000, DENSO Corporation initiated a 5 year environmental plan called Eco-Vision 2005 to reduce landfill waste by 50% with zero net cost increase. Eco-Vision 2005 also included targets for increased recycling and chemical reductions.

In 2000, DMTN launched programs to achieve all of the Eco-Vision 2005 targets, including landfill reductions.

Keys to Landfill Reduction

- Management committed resources to reduce landfill waste.
- Instead of calling trash receptacles “trash carts”, they were transformed into “recycle carts”.
- We conducted associate training with a special focus on segregation and recycling.
- Another important element was to reconsider how we think about trash: most trash is a commodity and has value; the challenge is to find somebody willing to pay for it.

The Success

Through 2005, DMTN reduced landfill waste by 87% with zero net cost increase. In 2005, DMTN only sent 360 tons of manufacturing waste to the landfill. DMTN is now starting to generate some revenue from what was formerly sent to the landfill.

360 tons is equivalent of sending one automobile to the landfill every 3 days and burying it.

In April 2006, DMTN's Instrument Cluster Division was the first DENSO manufacturing facility in North America to reduce its landfill waste by 95%.

Second Landfill Reduction Target

Through “kaizen” or continuous improvement activities, DMTN was able to execute our slogan, “Prevent Pollution: Reduce, Recycle, and Reuse”.

A new target was set to reduce landfill waste by 95% from all of DMTN's manufacturing operations by 2008.